

# The Financial Control Drag of Manual Accounts Payable



AP teams are struggling mightily to keep invoices moving, prevent fraud, and keep your vendors happy. But the sheer volume of manual processing takes too long and lets errors in, preventing finance leaders from getting a timely and accurate view of financial health.

## The high cost of manual AP means:

**🔍 Spreadsheets limit visibility**

Who doesn't like surprises? Heads of Finance. When AP runs slowly and there's no predictability in payment timing and outstanding liabilities, CFOs don't have the information and control they need.

78%

of companies say they can't forecast operating cash flow to within 5% accuracy 2-3 months out<sup>1</sup>

This is especially concerning when times are tight. Not having clear, up-to-date forecasting can force companies into making blind decisions without understanding strategic impact.

**👤 Exceptions and workarounds erode controls**

Manual processing relies on your people acting consistently, even when the mechanisms supporting them are imperfect. Approvals stall in inboxes and people find another approver because the vendor needs to get paid to move forward. People work from memory to enforce policies because they don't have time to look them up. Invoices with seemingly minor errors get paid first and (hopefully) fixed later.

39%

of invoices contain errors<sup>2</sup>

1/3

of organizations experience duplicate payments<sup>2</sup>

**📄 Manual invoice processing eats into efficiency**

If intaking invoices is taking a measurable chunk of your team's workday, you're probably wasting money and foregoing your ability to scale. Machines can capture invoice data much faster and with far greater accuracy than humans (and they don't get bored doing it).

68%

of finance decision-makers say payment operations waste a lot of team time<sup>3</sup>

Manual invoice processing costs exponentially **more than automated processing**:

<p style="font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">\$2.78</p> <p style="font-size: 10px; margin: 0;">Average cost of processing an invoice for top 20% in efficiency<sup>4</sup></p>	<p style="font-size: 24px; margin: 0;">\$12.88</p> <p style="font-size: 10px; margin: 0;">Average cost of processing a manual invoice for <b>everyone else</b><sup>4</sup></p>	<p style="font-size: 12px; margin: 0;">Average companies spend over</p> <p style="font-size: 24px; color: #e91e63; margin: 0;">4x</p> <p style="font-size: 10px; margin: 0;">as much to process invoices as <b>best-in-class</b> ones</p>
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The number of AP pros who spend over 10 hours a week processing invoices is declining, and it's likely due to increased automation<sup>5</sup>

2023

62%

↓

2024

52%

The top AP challenges in 2024 are driven by manual processes:

- 51% data entry
- 49% invoice exceptions
- 47% data errors and discrepancies cause process delays with approvers

**💰 Delays cut into profit**

Overdue invoices rack up costs, from late fees to lost early payment discounts, to less favorable terms in contract renewals. And that reflects badly on financial performance. Right now:

43%

of B2B invoices are overdue

1/3

of late payments are attributed to processing delays<sup>6</sup>

**🔄 Errors are expensive**

Manual processing is more vulnerable to payment errors and fraud. Automated processes and well-trained AI are better at picking up on subtle discrepancies, and they never have an off day.

39%

of invoices contain errors

1/3

of businesses submit duplicate payments<sup>7</sup>

**🕵️ Fraud creeps into the crevices**

Bad actors are constantly dreaming up new ways to bypass protective measures, leaving your teams scrambling to fight fraud.

- People are less capable of spotting subtle discrepancies
- Without automated workflows and traceability, employees can devise workarounds
- All of that adds up to losses, and you may not even know you've been hit

Our recommendation:

## Lean Financial Operations™

Companies are already inching toward automation with document scanning and other incremental enhancements, but **Lean Financial Operations** rethinks the entire AP operation, focusing on:



🗑️

Eliminating waste and fraud

📈

Increasing productivity

👁️

Visualizing every financial ops process

🔄

Creating end-to-end workflows for smooth movement

👤

Giving financial leaders total control

With the most comprehensive AP automation solution on the market, **Yooz makes AP predictable, governed, and responsive.**

Build for the future. The Lean AP Automation Blueprint for Finance Teams shows you how.

We should talk

Sources:

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5 <https://acarp-edu.org/accounts-payable-automation-trends-2024/>

6 <https://group.atradius.com/dam/jcr%3A5609b617-ac29-4e30-8b01-0663a01d94bd/payment-practices-barometer-us-2025-en.pdf>

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